

Best Buddies and the library pair up for scares

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CLIPPER INTERN

Halloween came two days early to the Duxbury Free Library as librarians and members of the Best Buddies program entered the Merry Room dressed in store-bought and handmade costumes alike. On Friday, Oct. 29, the local library collaborated with the Best Buddies program, a non-profit organization that helps teenagers with disabilities gain important social skills by forming friendships with other volunteer students, for a Halloween dance. By 4:30 p.m., the Merry room, decorated with skeletons on the walls and the usual tables and chairs moved away to create a dance floor, was soon filled with members of Best Buddies, their parents, and librarians, eager to celebrate the Halloween season with various treats and spooky music.

One parent, Danielle Marcol, was especially excited as she spoke of her daughter, Elizabeth, who was born with infantile spasm syndrome. When Elizabeth was born, Danielle was told by doctor's that her daughter would be in a catatonic state for the rest of her life. Now, Elizabeth is enjoying her first year with Best Buddies, and spent Friday on the dance floor with her Best Buddies partner and various



Members of the Best Buddies Club and their friends dressed to the nines for the Halloween party at the library Friday night.

friends.

"Best Buddies is fantastic," Marcol said as she watched her daughter dance to the Ghostbuster's theme music. "It is a big thing and has been very helpful with Elizabeth's disability."

Elizabeth, and others with similar disabilities, benefit from engaging and communicating with other teenagers, through Best Buddies, along with valuable social skills through the partnership program. Ellen Snoeyenbos, the Young Adult librarian at Duxbury Free Library, is in charge of the collaboration between the library and Best Buddies and spoke very positively of

the dance. She was approached by Lauren Feeney, the president of the Duxbury branch of Best Buddies and a longtime library patron, about the collaboration, which Snoeyenbos thought was a fantastic idea.

"Best Buddies is a great way to reach out to a new group of people," she says, "This isn't just a Duxbury event. People from other towns feel comfortable with going to the library."

Snoeyenbos also said that the collaboration hasn't just benefitted the Best Buddies program, but also has given a great outreach for the library. Best Buddies doesn't just help teenagers with social disabilities. The program allows the community as a whole to gain a better understanding and communication with all of its citizens. Also, it's a whole lot of fun.